

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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UNCLAS WELLINGTON 05103

FOR IBS, IPS, IOR CINCPAC FOR USIA ADVISOR

EO 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S WASHINGTON VISIT - MEDIA
REACTION.

1. RADIO AND NEWSPAPERS DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE TO THE OPENING DAY OF PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS.
2. RADIO NEW ZEALAND IN ITS HIGHLY-RATED MORNING REPORT, NOVEMBER 10, RAN MOST OF THE WELCOME SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT AND ALL OF PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S REPLY. HOWEVER, IN CONTRAST TO THE LOW KEY APPROACH BY NEWSPAPERS LATER IN THE DAY, IT PLAYED UP THE REACTION OF THE PRESIDENT TO MR MULDOON'S REMARKS ABOUT HIS LACK OF EXPERIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, BY FEATURING THE FOLLOWING ANALYSIS BY THE RADIO NEW ZEALAND ANNOUNCER:
3. "MR CARTER SHOWED IN HIS WELCOMING SPEECH THAT HE HAD APPARENTLY NOT FORGOTTEN CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENTS MADE BY UNCLASSIFIED

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MR MULDOON ABOUT THE AMERICAN LEADER'S FAMILY AND SOME OF HIS POLICIES. WITH A POKER-STRAIGHT FACE, AND WITHOUT INFLECTION IN HIS VOICE, MR CARTER SAID SIMPLY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD SHOWN GREAT INTEREST IN HIS ADMINISTRATION SINCE THE FIRST WEEKS. PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS DIDN'T ESCAPE THE LARGE TEAM OF AMERICAN REPORTERS AND CAMERAMEN AND THERE WAS SOME COMMENT AFTERWARDS." LATER

IN THE DAY RADIO NEW ZEALAND RAN AN EXTRACT FROM A STATE DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING IN WHICH AN AMERICAN REPORTER QUOTED MULDOON'S REMARKS AND QUERIED THE REASON FOR THE PRIME MINISTER MULDOON VISITING LA GRANGE IN GEORGIA AND WHETHER HE WOULD BE MEETING "BILLY AND GLORIA."

4. IT ALSO RAN THE NEWS EXTRACT, BASED ON THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED AFTER PRESIDENT CARTER AND MR MULDOON HAD MET.

5. TODAY, CHRIS TURVER OF RADIO NEW ZEALAND, QUESTIONED MR MULDOON IN WASHINGTON ABOUT THE ATTITUDE OF NEW ZEALAND AND THE UNITED STATES TO RUSSIAN FISHING VESSELS REPLENISHING IN NEW ZEALAND PORTS. MR MULDOON SAID THAT THERE WAS NO DIFFERENCE TO THEIR COMING FROM THE VISITS OF SOVIET MERCHANT AND CRUISE SHIPS. THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE TO THE SUBJECT HAD BEEN "VERY RELAXED AT EVERY LEVEL. THERE IS NO CONCERN AT ALL."

6. THE ONLY QUESTION MR MULDOON COULD SEE ARISING WAS WHETHER NEW ZEALAND WOULD PERMIT CREWS TO SWITCH OVER IN NEW ZEALAND. "THAT COULD BE DONE WITHOUT GIVING LANDING RIGHTS TO SOVIET AIRCRAFT AND I SEE NO OBJECTION TO THAT HAPPENING. WE CERTAINLY WOULD NOT BE FAVOURABLY DISPOSED TO GIVING LANDING RIGHTS TO SOVIET AIRCRAFT."

7. THE TWO TELEVISION CHANNELS CARRIED ONLY BRIEF VOICE UNCLASSIFIED

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REPORTS, FROM THE SAME CORRESPONDENT IN WASHINGTON, OVER STATIC SCENES OF WASHINGTON.

8. NEWSPAPERS, BOTH EVENING AND MORNING DID NOT COMMENT EDITORIALY ON THE VISIT, BUT ALL CARRIED WIRE PHOTOS OF THE VISIT AND HEADLINE STORIES FROM NZPA WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT MAX LAMBERT. HIS EVENING PAPER STORY WAS A STRAIGHTFORWARD REPORT OF THE VISIT TO THE WHITE HOUSE, BUT FOR THE MORNING PAPERS TODAY HE FILED A REPORT DEALING WITH A MULDOON COMMENT THAT AMERICANS WERE TRYING TO HELP NEW ZEALAND COUNTER PROBLEMS IN SELLING PASTORAL PRODUCTS TO JAPAN.

9. LAMBERT REPORTED THAT AFTER MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE, MR MULDOON HAD SAID THAT HIS TALKS HAD SHOWN AMERICANS FELT JAPAN SHOULD EASE UP ON SOME OF ITS ATTITUDES IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE. "I THINK THEY ARE USING THEIR GOOD INFLUENCES TO HELP US," HE SAID ... "AND THEY ARE ANXIOUS TO SEE CHANGES IN JAPAN'S ATTITUDES."

10. LAMBERT SAID THE PRIME MINISTER TERMED HIS TALKS A

"VERY GOOD BRIEFING SESSION" AND HAD SAID HE WAS ABLE TO REGISTER NEW ZEALAND'S DIRECT INTEREST IN MANY ISSUES WITH THE PRESIDENT AND SENIOR MEMBERS OF HIS CABINET.

11. NEW ZEALAND'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER, NOVEMBER 11, HAD ADDITIONAL STRAIGHT AND USEFUL COVER FROM LARS ERIK NELSON FOR THE WASHINGTON BUREAU OF NEWSWEEK, WHO PRESENTED AN "AMERICAN VIEW" OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT, RUN UNDER A SIX COLUMN SINGLE LINE HEADING "TALKS WERE ON ECONOMIC AND GLOBAL MATTERS," AT THE BOTTOM OF OVERSEAS NEWS PAGE.
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